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PATHWAY TO GOD

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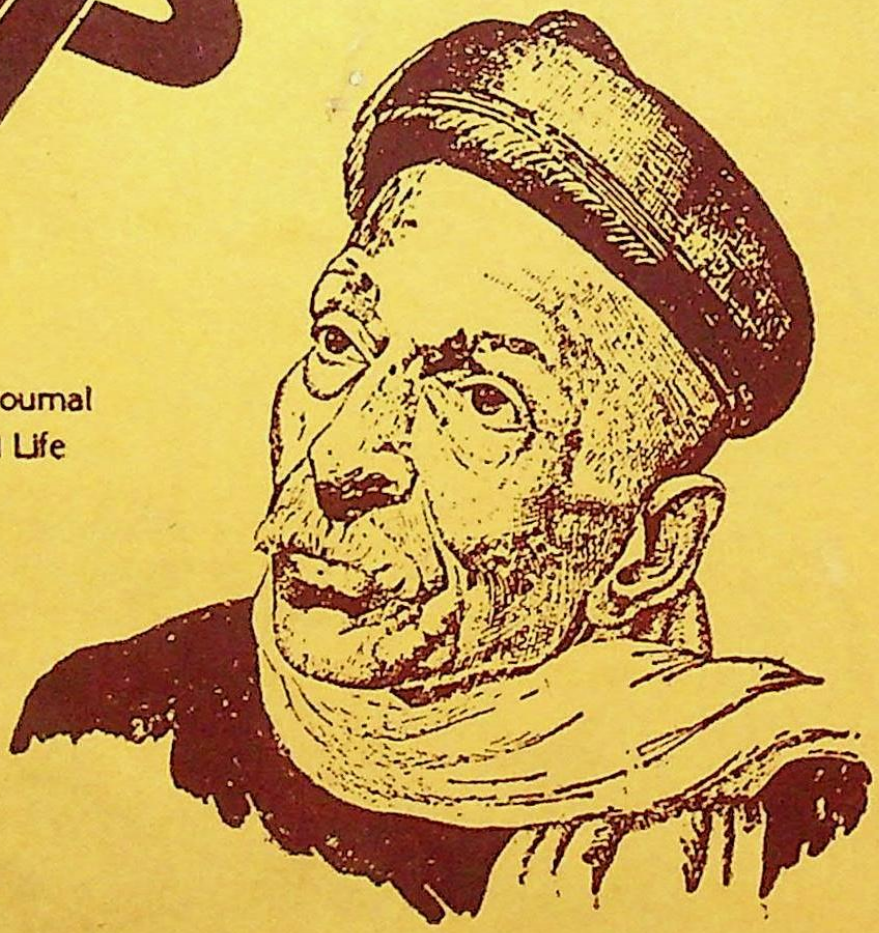

A Quarterly Journal
of Spiritual Life

ACADEMY OF COMPARATIVE PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION, BELGAUM.

PATHWAY TO GOD

(A quarterly Journal of Spiritual Life)

" One God, One World, One Humanity "

Editor : Prof P. K. Bhagoji

Vol. XV **January 1986** **No. 2**

CONTENTS

	Prayer		I
	Editorial		II
1.	The Significance and the Necessity of Shree Gurudeo's Teaching in the Modern World.	Prof. Y. D. Bhave	1
2.	Not A Leaf Moves But By His Will	Prof. M. P. Lakhani	7
3.	Kieregaard's Approach to Human Existence and its Logical Implications.	Dr. (Miss Filita Barucha	14
4.	The Cloud of Unknowing : An Analysis.	Motilal Pandit.	33

Reminiscences of Shri Gurudev

5.	Ranade's predecessors in the Theory of Asymptotism	Dr. S. G. Tulpule	33
6.	Spiritual Twins	Shri R. P. Kulkarni	42
7.	How I Met My Guru	N. S. Metrani	47
8.	Supernatural Telepathy ! or...	V. V. Ranade	53
9.	Academy Report		57

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PATHWAY TO GOD

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" One God, One World, One Humanity "

Vol. XX **January 1986** **No. 2**

PRAYER

यो ब्रह्माणं विदधाति पूर्वं
यो वै वेदांश्च प्रहिणोति तस्मै
तं ह देवमात्मबुद्धिप्रकाशं
मुमुक्षुर्वै शरणमहं प्रपद्ये ।

One who created Brahman at the beginning
of Creation,
And One who enlightened him with Vedas,
That God who Kindles the Wisdom of Soul
To Him I, striving for emancipation,
Surrender myself

– श्वेताश्वतर उपनिषत् (VI 18)
Shetashwatara Upanishat (VI 18)

Rise of India

If India must rise, she will rise in a most peculiar way, not hitherto known in all history. She will combine the virtues of the West and the East and will rise superior to both. If the West and the East are to meet, they will meet in India and not in Europe. What a glorious prospect lies before India. I see India flinging away superstition. sloth and intellectual inertia. I see her taking up the scientific spirit and the energy of Europe. I see her assimilating the excellence of both the East and the West and rising in the scale of modern nations, preserving all the while the integrity and the pristine purity of her spiritual self.

Gurudeo Ranade.
(P. E. P. 184)

Editorial

Many parts of the country have been declared as draught areas. Rainfall is said to be far below the average. Scarcity of fodder for the cattle is threatening the nation. Food is becoming a problem. And now the government is awakened to the destruction of forests carried on for decades. Tampering with Ecology is inviting total annihilation. With an eye on Industrialisation, people and government forgot the maintenance of balance in Nature. Protection of Nature could have meant protection of life. But the greed for Industrialisation made us blind, and destruction of forests became routine with us.

The pale green, green and dark green forests round about have yielded place to dazzling brown hilloks. Cutting of trees-old or young-has become a normal activity with us, the abnormal human-beings. It was a practice in this same country to plant a minimum of three trees before one was cut down. Nurturing the plankd trees was the duty for us

On almost all festive days we decorate our houses with mango leaves. Every Puja requires plantain trees; we cannot complete the Puja without flowers. Tulasi, Belpatri, Uttarani, Durva and such other things are necessary for religious rites. Cocoanut is called Kalpavriksha. The Puja mantras mention Parijata, Bakula, Champaka, Mandara and so many other flowers. All our gods - thirty three crores and more, but all various forms one Almighty- are associated with flowers. Lord Vishnu with Padma, Laxmi with red-lotus, Lord Shiva and Jagadamba Parvati with blue lotus, Brahman is born in the Kamal (Lotus) and Sharada the goddess of knowledge has made the white lotus her easy-chair. Manmatha the god of Love has Aravind (white lotus), Ashoka, Mango flower, Jasmine and Neelot-pala (blue lotus) as his weapons. The young mango tree is considered to be his chariot, being drawn by the parrots.

The sages of the past had their Ashramas in forests. Forests, trees and flowers could create a holy atmosphere. The Ashramas were Bird Sanctuaries and wild-Life Sanctuaries protected by those saints. The cities of the past were full of parks-Udyanas and Upavanas.

The old Sanskrit works and for that matter literature in any Indian language have aboudant description of nature. We must admit our ancestors had an eye for beauty, and they saw God in nature. For them nature was God incarnation. In the beautiful and holy environment, penance could go on in complete tranquility and God-Realisation was the natural result.

This god-nature could bestow on humanity plenty of rain, bounty of food and peace leading to a pious life.

Now there is a cry of 'Environment Protection', a cry for preserving nature without any hindrance to Industrialisation. Our nation, our people should live in our tradition set by the Rishis, the sages and seers of the past. We worship the Audumbara tree, the Vatavriksha, the Banyan tree. Our belief is that God resides in all the things. Modern science also mentions that the trees have feelings and sentiments. They are living beings. They are the abodes of birds and creatures wild and otherwise. If we feel God resides in all these, why not protect them ?

Let us save nature and save ourselves! Let us bring the Beauty of Nature on this land and once again create a heaven which will please the gods!

* * *

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3-7-1886

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6-6-1957

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* * *

The Significance and the Necessity of Shree Gurudev's Teaching In the Modern World.

Prof Y. D. Bhave

The lot of the modern man is that of a hero of a shakespearean Tragedy, engulfed by hostile forces most of them invoked because of his inner weakness, betrayed by what is within him. In his anxiety to conquer nature, he prayed for the aid of science. It emerged like the genie of the Arabian Nights out of the magic bottle. It helped him in a way undreamt of by him. Man with the eager assistance of science almost enslaved the very elements of nature-air, water, earth & fire, as he left long behind him the filthy condition of a naked caveman, a barbarian boor gazing at sunrise, sunset, and night with myriads of stars & moon with awe and superstitious fear. Man has conquered space. He can journey even to the most distant planets. He now lives in air-conditioned sky-scrapers nestling among flowers of numberless sensuous pleasures generating unquenchable yearning for more, ever so more. Man has perhaps reached 'El Dorado', the paradise, the pinnacle and acme of materialistic prosperity.

But the ginie is demanding its price. All the grandeur, glory & triumph materialist in nature is not without its seamy side. The glitter of success is not without its sphere of darkness. The tinsel and brilliance of modern materialistic civilization has started revealing its hollowness and emptiness. Too much of dependence on science has made man to regard himself as "physico-chemical organism, the lineal descendent of some bit of primordial soil". The concept of the divine origin of man and of the divine hand behind all creation has been put in a cold storage. And ignoring the truth that

life cannot be results of adjustment of atoms and molecules, that lifeless matter cannot create life & that mere permutations and combinations of inorganic atoms cannot be transformed into living cells or even cellule without life-giving power, man, modern man, lives in his self-created mechanistic universe, devoid of plety, sense of mystery and of innocent wonder. He hae naturally grown to be extremly narrow-minded in his outlook and dangerously self-centered. His only concern is self-aggrandisement by gaining greater control over means of production. For that purpose he enters into cut-throat competition He uses any means. He will exploit weakness and poverty of the down-trodden and see that they grow weaker and poorer. He his grown shamelessly selfish, like Marlowe's Jew of Malta. A secret sense of fear constantly corrodes and gnaws at has inner core that others will deprive him of his material superiority. That sense of fear has generated in him a perverted concept of self-security. Under its influence he has become so mean that he follows ruthlessly the doctrine of Machiavellism. He exploits any means in the name of national interest. Apart from conventional or traditional arms, he is prepared without any qualms of conscience to use atom-bombs, hydrogen bombs or indulge in biological warfare, bringing in its train incalculable destruction. Man has become so selfish, degraded, mean-minded, perverted that he has permitted that destructive sense of fear to dominate his personality. His entire outlook is poisoned, diseased. He has lost his sense of goodness humanity, sympathy and even pity. His conscience is blunted. His perception is soiled. He has allowed science, materialistic science to rule his mind. In consequence, he has brought himself to the brink of total destruction and annihilation.

Is there no hope ? Is man doomed to utter destruction ? Has he reached the point of no return ? Is there a way to save man, modern man, entire mankind from complete and total demolition ?

Yes, thers is a way out. Man has brought himself to this tragic state of affairs because his mind has not kept

pace, 'paripasu' with the development of science. The result is that his inner being is crumbled. He has grown over-suspicious, degraded. He is rotten within; his will power and the power to do good is thus emasculated. He needs a tonic that will restore his moral and spiritual strength. His instincts require, badly, purgation and sublimation. He is to be reformed from within.

We can achieve that by following the pathway revealed by the jewel of great mystics and seers, Shree Gurudeo Ranade. This pathway of mysticism is different from the formalist teachings of so-called God-men robed in saffron; or fanatics robed in uniforms of their sects, creeds or cults. Mysticism goes beyond the cult of formal ritualism. It eschews asceticism of Sanyasins. It does not require tonsure and donning of sack-cloth. Retiring into lonely recesses of deep jungles away from human sociely is not its requisite. There is no need to quit your profession or vocation. Kabir did not give up his profession of a weaver. The 'butcher-saint' continued to be a butcher and 'the devoted wife, to God and to her husband, had greater divine powers than a sanyasin meditating in lonely corner of a forest for years. She never left her house & household duties. Neither Eknath, perhaps the greatest of saints, philosophers and renowned mystics, nor his Guru Janardanswami did run away from 'sansar'. They remained true and loyal to both home and heaven. This way of life is bound to appeal more than any other type of philosophy as it is nearer to the mood and temperament of the modern man.

Further this pathway is open to one and all; to the rich and poor, to the high-born and low-born, to the blue-blooded aristocrat & helpless pariah, and to the followers of all faiths. There are no restrictions of caste, clime, colour or sex. A blade of grass sits along with the topmost tree and the light of heaven falls equally on both. Like the rain from above, it does not differentiate. It descends freely anywhere and everywhere. It blesses all alike. 'All is one under the universal sun' said Shelley and in that sense it is universal.

This is the religion of self-improvement. But it is not without its social significance. It aims at the individual uplift and social welfare. This pathway undoubtedly leads to reforming an individual by purging off the dross and dirt of degraded animalism and by making man sublime. While doing it, it does not segregate the individuala way from the human society, as does the philosophy of surrealism which makes an individual, 'individuaiistic' who ultimately rots in the mire of self-created nightmare. This philosophy of mysticism is for the happiness of an individual and for the welfare of the world 'Give your personality a lift and you will lift the whole world' said Swami Ramtirth. A lamp that is lit spreads light and illumines everything around it. When a rose-bud flowers into a rose its fragrance fills all the space around it.

This religion of the improvment of human society through the agency of an emancipated individual, rich with divine light and humanitarian outlook is typically modern, because it is scientific. To quote the words of Shree Gurudev; 'A mystic always aims at realising the immutable Reality behind the mutable Universe. His intellect engaged in the search of that Reality is thoroughly scientific. It tests its spiritual experience through actual experiments before it decides the reality or otherwise of its nature. What does a scientist do? He does not blindly believe in anything. He considers his experience alone to be true, He asks us first to accept a hypothesis to test its reality through experiments and, if it stands the test then to accept it... otherwise to throw it off as a false proposition. The mystic also tells us to do the same thing with respect to his spiritual experiences.'

Thus the faith of an aspirant to the knighthood of spiritual ecstay resembles the hypothesis which a scientist has to accept as basis for his experiments. What is hypothesis to a scientist, faith is to a 'sadhaka'. Just as hypothesis is a must for a scientist so is faith in the Guru and the sacred name he gives is essential as a starting point of this adventure in the research of spiritual experience. But this 'faith' is not 'blind

surveillance or thoughtless obedience'. The faith is to be tested. If what the Guru has said is proved to be true as the result of your research then alone accept it. If it is otherwise, fling to the winds words of your Guru as useless bits of paper. As Shree Gurudev remarked, 'ours is a laboratory Religion; with this peculiarity, that our person is our laboratory."

But the student who undertakes this research should cultivate within him sublime sense of the moral values of life. He is to emerge out of his den of self-centredness. He needs have to clean conscience. He is to discipline himself in such a way as to have potential control over animal elements in his nature. And then he should, 'approach a realised master; receive Divine name from him; meditate on it with steadfast devotion. Surrender all to the Divine will and wait patiently for the descent of His Grace'. "In the fulness of time the Divine Grace will certainly descend upon him and grant him glimpses of the divine splendour, and thrills of Divine Bliss ". Thus equipped he is to serve humanity. In other words, the emancipated devotee is not to retire to his cell of inner loneliness. He is to utilize all that he has gathered, his inner richness for the welfare of mankind. He is to strive for propagating and spreading the great message that it is spiritual culture and its oneness that is the cementing and unifying force for the entire humanity. "Realise one God, .then alone you will be able to realise one world and one humanity. And that certainly is the crying need of our times. We require as never before, a philosophy or a religion that will promote life. But to initiate this process, it is imperative to educate the world to value something higher than life, because life dedicated only to life is beast-like. It is powerless to protect men from threatened annihilation. "If life is to be fully human," observes Betrand Russell, 'it must serve some end which is impersonal and above mankind, such as God or truth or beauty. Those who best promote life do not have life for that purpose. They aim at bringing the eternal". A close connection or union with this world brings the gift of undying strength and peace. The modern man is to be taught

to have contact with 'the eternal' to bring something of the Divine, to make his life safe from selfishness, greed, cruelty, hatred and perverted sense of security It will teach him to see that his life is 'creative'. To quote Romain Rolland : ' The spirit is the light.' The modern man needs this light. And the pathway shown by Shree Gurudev will certainly fulfil this dire and urgent need of the modern man.

It will bring him peace that 'passeth understanding; inner spiritual energy that will strengthen his moral power; will teach him to rise above selfishness, meanness, suspicion, hatred, greed and fear. It will widen his outlook; make him humanitarian; will inspire within him, love stronger than death; will inculcate in him sympathy and humanity deep as ocean and high as sky. And it will save him from annihilation and destruction. Thus ennobled and emancipated, he will cetainly transform the dream of 'One God' one Religion and one Humanity into concrete reality.

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" So far as the utility of the mystic to the Society is concerned, we may almost regard it as a truism of Mysticism that a mystic who is not of supreme service to the Society is not a Mystic at all Ii is true, that here again there are temperamental differences among mystics. One mystic may choose more or less to be of a quietistic and another more or less an activistic of type. But the fact remains that in ther case he is of supreme value to mankind by calling their attention from moment to moment to the perception and greatness of God "

-R. D. Ranade
(Mystisism in Maharashta)

Not a Leaf Moves But by His Will

Prof. M. V. Lakhani

If a person is in suffering or pain or trouble, he is often consoled by saying he must accept all this suffering as coming from God. Nothing happens except by His will. Not a leaf moves but by His will and so on. This sets one thinking : if not a leaf moves without His will and there are hundreds of leaves on a tree, there are billions of trees in the world and there are trillions and trillions of leaves, so God shall have to use so many bits of His will to move all these innumerable leaves ! If leaves move by His will, then other things must also be happening only by His will, Billions of waves on the surface of the water, clouds, rain, drought, floods, wind, storms, cyclones, typhoons, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and other natural calamities also must be happening only by His will. All life-vegetable, bird, animal, human-must also be coming into existence by His will. Wars, fights, murders and all the human ills must be happening by His will. It seems God enjoys creating trouble in the world. It would appear that He is saddistic or whimsical. It does not sound well. Sages all the world over have described Him as all kind, all love. Then, is there something wrong with out thinking !

Leaves move only when the wind is blowing. If the wind is not blowing, the leaves do not move. So the cause of movement of the leaves is the wind and why does the wind move ? The wind moves because of the difference of temperature on the earth and its atmosphere, but where does the difference of temperature come from? It comes from the heat of the sun and where does the heat of the sun come from. On the sun, there is gas burning and it is the burning of the gas that gives us light and heat and who placed the gas there and so on. If you go on probing backwards, then we will come to the first or the primordial cause. Thus, we find that the movement of the leaves is

the effect, the cause of which is the movement of the wind; the movement of the wind is the effect, the cause of which is the difference in temperature; the difference in temperature is the effect, the cause of which is the heat of the sun; the heat of the sun is the effect, the cause of which is the burning of the gas and so forth. We see that everything has a cause and effect and nowhere does God come in.

When God decided to create, he created two principles--positive and negative; Purusha and Prakriti; soul and matter. These different names indicate the same thing. He then ordered prakriti to create. Prakriti created all things that exist in the whole creation. Then purusha permeated prakriti and the life began. Let us take human body. It is a dead body, it is a dead matter until the soul penetrates into it, the soul permeates it. When the soul leaves the body, the body is a dead matter, it is matter, it is part of prakriti. This is also signified by the Shive Linga Puja. Shiva Linga is the male or the positive principle penetrating the female or the negative principle and this is how life begins. Whenever there is an organisation or a Government, rules and regulations are framed for its smooth running. Prakriti also made laws for the smooth running of the creation and these are called the laws of nature, so that nature and prakriti are made synonymous. Everything that is happening in the world, in this creation, happens according to the laws of nature. Nothing exists outside the laws of nature. The laws of a Government are made by it's King. Laws of Nature are made by God.

In a country when a person breaks a law, he is punished in accordance with the laws of the country and it is said he is punished according to the law; it is not said that he is punished by the will of the King, though the laws are made by the King. Similarly, when a person is in suffering, that suffering is a punishment in accordance with the laws of nature. Why should it be said that his suffering is due to the will of God ? To tell him that he must accept it as a will of God is to weaken his own will power and weaken his

character. The proper thing is to tell him that his suffering is due to his violation of the laws of nature, that he must face it like a man and try to correct himself to mitigate the suffering. If he is told that, then his will power is being strengthened, his character is being strengthened and he will try to correct himself and he should be told that if he puts forth effort, God will also help him because God helps those, who help themselves.

It is said that by praying to one's God, suffering is lessened or altogether removed. If that be true, then where is the question of law. In a country, when a person is found guilty and punished and if he puts forth a prayer in a proper form to the King, then the King may reduce his punishment or set aside the punishment. So also if a prayer is put forth in a proper form to one's God, the God may relieve him of his suffering or set aside his suffering. God is above the law as the King is above the law, that is, they can take decision above the law.

Studying the life of those, who have risen to the top of their profession, it is often found that a person has struggled hard against odds and impediments that came in his way and successfully got over them and reached the highest. Had he given up, when he came across odds and impediments, accepting them as coming from God, he would never have risen. It is true that not everybody who has struggled hard has risen to the top or not everybody who has appealed to the King or God has got over his suffering or his suffering has been removed but one should not forget that forgiveness from the King or God is not simply for the mere asking. It again depends upon various factors. To act is one's duty and it strengthens one's character. If the punishment is not removed immediately, one should feel that the effect of his cause, that is the punishment for his wrong doing, amounts to the same thing as his karma is paid out and he has gone through the period of punishment. Understanding this will prevent sufferer from lamenting, wining or whimpering. It will help him to face his troubles with courage and determination and so strengthen his character.

A few examples will make it clear how this understanding clould be useful in every day life and make life less painful and easier.

A friend of mine was suffering from Indigestion. Anything he ate distressed him. Going the rounds of hospitals and doctors for 20 years brought him no relief. He was then advised to stop all medication, study the causes of indigestion and identify the causes of his trouble, whether it was indiscriminate eating, over-eating, wrong timings of eating, inadequate chewing, if any particular item of food caused him distress or any other factors. Accepting the advice, he undertook two years of dietary discipline along with some corresponding medication. He regained his normal digestion. He is now normal and happy. He can eat and digest everything. The cause of his suffering was breaking some digestive laws of Nature. Removing the error and obeying the laws of digestion, he got over the trouble. God did not come in the picture.

There was a renowned Pandit in Benaras. His name and fame had spread all over India. People from distant places went to him to get their difficulties solved. Once a man from Bombay went to see him at Benaras to find a solution to his difficulties. He knocked at the door of Pandit's house. The door was opened by the Pandit's wife. On enquiring whether the Pandit was at home, the wife started abusing the Pandit, calling him names and said she did know where the fellow was and banged the door shut in the face of the visitor. The visitor was surprised and bewildered. He sat down on the steps outside the house to await the Pandit's return. When the Pandit returned, he accousted the visitor cordially, took him inside the house and enquired the purpose of his visit. The visitor said that his affair could wait and he first wanted to understand the cause of the behaviour of the Pandit's wife. The Pandit tried to evade the question but at the persistence of the visitor, he told him that in one of his past lives he was a crow and his present wife was a donkey. The donkey had a wound on its back. The crow would peck at the wound causing the donkey great pain who

would run screaming. This went on day after day. One day the crow pecked at the wound so forcibly that its beak got caught into the bone of the back and could not be freed. The donkey crying with pain ran headlong and fell in a river where both the donkey and crow got drowned. Now crow was born as this Pandit and donkey as his present wife. In the past, crow had pecked with his beak and now the wife was pecking with her tongue. The Pandit could have beaten his wife, turned her out or got rid of her to save himself from the suffering and the humiliation but he realised that his present suffering was the expiation of his past evil karma. If he postponed the payment by driving the wife out, he would have to pay later in future life. The karmic link would continue, but if he paid the price now and paying out the karma, he would be free so he accepted the situation willingly and lightly. In the suffering of the Pandit, there was no hand of God. The suffering was in the punishment of his evil karma.

I had to collect some medicine for my wife from the hospital. I was going on my cycle. I was keeping to the left of the road as required by the traffic rules. A bus was coming towards me from the front. As the bus neared me, a cyclist hit my cycle from the back. I lost my balance and I and my cycle fell to the right towards the road. By this time, the bus had reached the spot. The driver, seeing me falling, with great presence of mind, stopped the bus immediately. The commuters in the bus felt a great jolt and those standing in the bus fell forward. As the bus stopped, I fell on its mudguard and got a wound below my eye. A second's delay in stopping the bus, would have found me crushed under the bus. A friend in the bus recognised me, got down from the bus, came to me and raised me and my cycle. He detained the cyclist and asked me what is to be done with him. I asked the cyclist how did he bang into me. He said that his cycle had no brakes. I reprimanded him for riding a cycle without brekes and asked my friend to let him go. The friend took me to a nearby hospital where the doctor dressed my wound and bandaged it. The friend offered to take me home.

I told him No and instead asked him to get a tonga, put me and my cycle in the tonga and accompany me. We went to the hospital, collected my wife's medicine and then he took me home. At home, I laughed and made light of the bandage because I did not want my wife to get perturbed. I could have thrashed the cyclist or called the police or confiscated his cycle but I did nothing of the sort and let him go because I thought in my mind that the cyclist had not hurt me intentionally. We did not know each other, therefore, this hurt must be the payment of some past evil karma of mine against the cyclist and he had got his revenge. Had I got him into trouble, the whole karmic link would have continued but by letting him go and accepting the punishment, I had freed myself from the karmic responsibility. Because of understanding of this law, my peace of mind was not disturbed. Considering that I was saved from the claws of death by an hair's breadth, I was not frightened, I was not nervous. I was not perturbed in any way and went about attending to my business in a normal way.

In order to go to college, I had to take two buses : the first one started from near my house. I had to get down enroute to catch another bus which started from that place and would leave me at my college door. In the first bus, the ticket was five paise, Sometimes, the rush in the bus was so great that the conductor would not reach me by the time I had to get down to catch the other bus. I could not wait for the conductor to reach me because of the risk of my missing the second bus. Thus, this was a ticketless travel and I saved five paise, though not deliberately or intentionally. In the evening, I used to return home from the college in a three-wheeler auto which cost me Rs. 1.05. But on the day when I was a ticketless commuter, the auto driver would ask me to pay Rs. 1.20. I would draw his attention to the meter-reading which showed Rs. 1.05 but he would insist that I should pay Rs. 1.20, which I gladly paid because I realised that enhanced payment was punishment for my tieketless travelling. I feel happy that my punishment was light and quick.

An old woman got erruptions on her whole body and there was unbearable itching and burning. She was restless and miserable. She sent word to her Guru praying that he have mercy on her and relieve her suffering. The Guru, in his reply said that in her young age when, to snatch a gold necklace from a baby girl, she strangled her and threw her in the canal, she did not care for the suffering she caused to the baby and to the parents who missed the baby. She had to pay for her evil deed. She should accept the suffering willingly and utter "Ram Nam" to lessen her suffering. The woman is since dead.

In everybody's life, there are several instances of suffering and pain every day. Each instance would require different treatment according to the conditions and the temperment of the sufferer, but the basic principles would be the same. Thus, understanding the basic principles will not only lighten one's suffering but also make him avoid doing wrong actions and further guide him to do right actions, leading him to righteousness.

Kierkegaard's Approach to Human Existence and its Logical Implications

Dr. (Miss) Filita Barucha

I. Introduction and Background

Who is Kierkegaard ?

This question can best be answered by Kierkegaard's own suggestion for his epitaph " THAT INDIVIDUAL ".

Kierkegaard was an individual who died of longing for eternity.

Kierkegaard's biography is necessarily more relevant to his thought than is the case with most philosophers for he himself saw philosophical enquiry neither as the construction of systems nor as the analysis of concepts, but as the expression of an individual existence. As Karl Jaspers says–

"The Philosopher of systems is, as a man, like some one who builds a castle but lives next door in a shanty. Such a fantastical being does not himself live within what he thinks, but the thought of a man must be the house in which he lives or it will become perverted". Kierkegaard was surely not "this philosopher of systems."

The " Genius in the market town " (Kierkegaard) led a life that was almost as uneventful externally as that of Oblomov with inward history that was even richer in emotional drama and of a phenomenal intellectual activity. Never did a more troubled soul or a more lucid and swift intelligence seek enlightenment from the learned only to reject it as valueless.

Kierkegaard saw that most philosophy is not even wisdom after the event but only wisdom about wisdom and little to do with any event. For Kierkegaard, ' individuals

alone were real.' The genuine critical dilemmas of the intellectual exploration of the facts nor at the laws of thinking about them. Their resolutions emerge through conflicts and tumults in the soul; anxieties, agonies, pentlous adventures of faith into unknown territories.

Kierkegaard looked upon himself as " a sort of trial man. " He cannot be classed under any of the following types :-

Poet, prophet, philosopher, savior, genius, writer.

With him a new form of human reality appears in history. He is so to speak a representative destiny. A sacrificer whose way out of the world leads to experience for others. He is by the total staking of his whole nature like modern martyrs which he precisely denied being.

Kierkegaard compared himself to a bird which foretells rain.

" When in a generation, a thunderstorm begins to threaten, individuals like me appear. "

His problem was to awaken men. He had a certain police talent, to be a spy in the service of divinity. He uncovered, but he did not assert what should be done,

Indirect communication becomes for him the sole way of communicating genuine truth. Indirect communication as expression, is appropriate to the ambiguity of genuine truth in temperal existence, in which process it must be grasped through sources in every existence.

His loneliness and his melancholy carried him almost to the " edge of imbecility, and was something that he could conceal as long as he was independent, but made him useless for any service where he could not himself determine every thing.

Either-or the clue to all his thinking was consciously rooted in his personal need for tension, passion, sacrifice, individuality, between the absolute of concentration and of dissipation, the choice was inevitably certain.

The central event of Kierkegaard's life and the case of the crystallization of his thought was the renunciation of Regina Olsen as representing women and the world. His quest for a personal relation with God and his desire for a lasting tie with Regina Olsen – both left unfulfilled were the sources of Kierkegaard's existential thought.

We can conclude about the personality of Kierkegaard in his own words : " like a solitary fir tree egoistically separate and pointed upwards I stand, casting no shadows and only the wood dove build its nest in my branches ".

We can conclude the theme of his work and his passion in the following lines :

This is the existentialist's choice, preferable to living under order is the flight into the desert with the furies on on one's trial. For order is fraud and imposition. The world is truly a desert, a land without signs ".

II. How the Problem of Existence Arose for Kierkegaard

Kierkegaard thought the most frightful way to live was to bewitch the whole world through one's discoveries and cleverness, to explain the whole of nature and not understand oneself.

He set himself up as a radical opponent of the " system " philosophers. In particular Kierkegaard rejected as futile Hegel's method to concepturalize things through the dialectical method. The error that Kierkegaard sees in such a rationalistic effort can be comprehended by contrasting Kierkegaard's ultimate datum of personal existence with a representative Hegelian concept, say the concept of unity. If personal existence is to be regarded in the way that Hegel viewed unity then it is a concept. Since concepts enter into deduction and become thereby knowable. Thus if personal existence were a concept we would have to grasp it through existence of reason.

Kierkegaard points out that our awareness to personal existence comes by a transnational act – a special kind of " encounter " i. e. it comes through a direct feeling rather than through the abstracting activity of the intellect. This means that the Kierkegaardian " personal existence " cannot be accounted for within the Hegelian system. For Kierkegaard, personal existence stands in absolute opposition to non-personal existence. This implies that each individual man is faced with the inexorable situation of either being or not being himself. The mediating and synthesizing forces of reason are not effective at the fundamental level.

According to Kierkegaard who aspires struggles, loves would reject the following passage of (Hegel) :

"By term 'I', I mean myself, a single and altogether determinate person, ... I express a thorough universal " I " ..... we may say (that) "I" and thought are the same, or more definitely (that) "I" is thought as a thinker.

The age of reflection has since Fichte been characterized as reasoning without restraint. Kierkegaard did not oppose reflection in order to annihilate it, but rather in order to overcome it by limitlessly engaging in it and mastering it.

The one-sidedness of the present age is to be discarded. Adages like 'We, our age-the 20th century" ... etc have to be put aside in the interest of existing individuals. Hence Kierkegaard became acutely aware to the fact that modern philosophy in its very ambition is aloof from the entire point and offers a despairing individual not edification in the life, he can live but distraction, dissipation and destruction.

Kierkegaard set himself to the task of finding a true philosophy articulating the intellectual the aesthetic and the ethical in the living body of an existing individual. He wants to teach the inquirer to know and meet the requirements of his situation.

III. The Central Question

Fundamentally in its most simplified form, the problem that Kierkegaard raised in his works was :

i) "What is the point of man's life ? "

ii) "What sense can be made out of human existence ?"

iii) "What is the purpose of human life ? "

The clearest presentation of Kierkegaard's view in his "Philosphical Fragments", under the pseudonym of Johannes Climacus.

Climacus wished to point out that the solution to man's problems lies in somehow being able to find a link between man's historical life and some sort of eternal knowledge.

It is not the function of the Philospher to teach a Weltanschauung. The Philosher should be concerned with making clear to man the possibilities of choice and showing what choice is. The central question of Kierkegaard was how to illuminate human existence with a view to the decision and choice which the individual has to make for himself.

IV. Kierkegaard's Approach to the Study of Human Existence.

Kierkegaard's sceptical querry is actuated by two fundamental affirmations. (I) The human individual is content with nothing but real existence.

I (a) As disembodied intelligences we might be put off with a realm of essences or ideal possibilities.

b) As concrete individuals we hanker after existence.

Hence the link is discovered which connects (1) viz. the abstract ontological problem of the meaning of existence and (2) viz. man's metaphysical religious aspiration.

IInd affirmation arises on account of the attempt to answer the question. ' How can the thirst for existence be assuaged ? '

Kierkegaard holds that ' (II) The intellect itself is unable to transcend the sphere of essences'. The experience of this inability produces a crisis of despair. As an intelligent being man sees himself debarred from ever filling his metaphysical religious need. The despair becomes the peripetia of an inner drama, or (to change the metaphor) the healing crisis of a metaphysical sickness. The surrender of all hope which is the surrender. also of the pride of intellect, is followed by a by miraculous disclosure of existence. What the methodical It a dvance of the intellect cannot achieve is reached suddenly a " leap. " The answer offered is not supported by reason. is an absurdity - a paradox. It is here that ' Faith ' steps in.

Kierkegaard asserted the proposition ' as you believe, so are ' you, ' and ' Faith is Being. '

The shock administered to our intellect by this paradox marks the encounter with trans-essential existence. At the climax of the crisis, the individual is thought of by Kierkegaard as paralyzed by dread (Anguish or Angist). This is not a dread of any concrete danger but of nothing. It is a giddiness in the face of infinite possibilities that engulf the determinate and existent. Since if everything is possible nothing is determinate and certain.

The experience of dread is at the same time man's awareness of freedom.

This is not the freedom to choose between good and evil, but the moral fundamental freedom which precedes and renders possible his commitment to a scale of values.

We shall further develop this approach of Kierkegaard to human existence in the light of our present times after we have reviewed his exposition of the " individual situation " in detail.

IV. Stages on Life's Way.

In EITHER/OR, : A Fragment of Life ; the doctrine of choice is put to work in relation to a distinction between two ways of life, the ethical and the aesthetic.

The aesthetic view-point implies a sophisticated and romantic hedonism. Kierkegaard says of the asthete, 'see him in his season of pleasure, did he not crave for one pleasure after another, variety his watchword' ?

The protagonist tried to realize every possibility but none of these furnish him with more than a momentary actuality. Every mood, every thought, good or bad, cheerful or sad, you pursue to its utmost limit, yet in such a way that this comes to pass in abstract rather than in concrete, in such a way that the pursuit itself is a little more than a mood ....." But just, since boredom is always to be guarded against so its threat is perpetual. In rhe end, the search for novelty leads to the threshold of despair. Kierkegaard advises them,

" Purify your Hearts ".

By contrast, the ethical constitutes the sphere of duty, of universal rules, rules of uncoditioned demands and tasks. " For the man in the ethical stage the chief thing is not whether one can count on one's finger how many duties one has, but that man has once felt the intensity of duty in such a way that the consciousness of it, is for him the assurance of the validity of his being " *

The intensity of feeling enters .at this ethical stage, but unlike, Kant, Kierkegaard's categorical imperatives are felt rather than reasoned.

In 'Fear & Trembling' the passage from the ethical to the religious is even more striking than from the asthetic to the ethical. In demanding from Abraham, the sacrifice of his son Isaac, GOD demands something that from the ethical view-

* (EITHER/OR, II pg. 223)

point is absolutely forbidden. Abraham must concur in a ' suspension of the absurd ' and make the leap of faith. Here no rules can help the individual, he makes a criterionless choice.

" A man has only one GOD " says Kierkegaard ' and if he cannot reach an understanding with Him, to whom, then, shall he go ' ? In the knowledge that GOD is all in all, the religious man has found the rock on which to edify his life.

There are certain key experiences on the margins of the ethical and the religious through which one may come to ensure oneself as an indidvlual. One such experience that Kierkegaard describes is–

"The sickness unto Death"
Another is the generalized fear and
anxiety that is characterized in
"The concept of Dread".

The experience of each, forces the Individul to confront a void. He does not despair of any contingent but of himself.

In analysing despair we recognize guilt. But it is this consciousness of sin that alone enables a man to enter to Christianity.

Hence "the way of the Cross"
becomes clear and the
individual is an authentic
Christian according to Kierkegaard.

Summarizing the "Stage On Life's Way" Kierkegaard wrote the following :-

"While aesthetic existence is essentially enjoyment and ethical existence is essentially struggle and victory, religious existence is essentially suffering". *

V. The Inwardness of Kierkegaard

In his terrible loneliness, understood by and really bound to absolutely no one Kierkegaard called to GOD, "GOD in heaven, if there were not some most inward centre in a man where all this could be forgotten, who could hold out ? "

The reality of everyone's existence proceeds from the "inwardness of man", not from anything that the mind can codify. The Kierkegaardian maxim that "Truth is subjectivity" was upheld, for it was in the subjective sphere and the inward relation oneself to oneself and to the subjectivity of others that man became aware of GOD and of a relation to Him.

Kierkegaard writes of man as a being with passion for eternal happiness-and this is the only kind of man he writes for.

To achieve genuine personal existence-a path that involves us in nothing less than a leap, a cross, a bottomless chaos. This awareness of the conditions for becoming authentic a part of self-knowledge. But the full truth i. e. the completion of self knowledge is the "intensified awareness" of an encounter with GOD in the person of Christ

How is it possible for a temporal being to encounter an eternal one ? Kierkegaard insisted that this paradox about the man-GOD relationship can be resolved only by faith in the incarnation i. e. it can be resolved only through believing in the conceptual absurdity that GOD, the eternal enters into a relationship with individual men through the person of Christ.

The demands of faith do not end here. How do we know that the GOD to which we are led is not the satan or an imaginative projection, but the Christian GOD ?

Of greatest importance is not the eternal rationality appraised what to which we relate, but rather the inward felt how.

"Religious faith is the Archimedean lever whereby the accentuated individual can move the world".

He concludes :

"An objective uncertainty held fast in an appropriation-process of the most passionate inwardness is the truth, the highest truth attainable for an existing individual".

VI. Either/OR – The Challenge of Kierkegaard

Kierkegaard rejected all formal Christianity and took up the battle-cry " Either/Or ".

To Christianity as Kierkegaard began to understand, the demand ' Either/Or ' applied absolutely : it must be absolutely true or absolutely false.

> Either whole hearted, obedience to GOD's law or open rebellion against it; either for or against Christ, for or against Truth; either hot or cold, but never lukewarm or half-hearted.

It has been eloquently expressed by Johannes Hohlenberg;

" What is at stake is the choice between the individual and the collective, between the human person and the crowd, between freedom and slavery between Christ and Anti-Christ.'

EITHER : the life of the individual person a microcosm as the image of GOD, capable of free, responsible action and therefore..... a life of toil and much suffering and many dangers;

OR : the life of an impersonal free member of a collective, without the possibility of independent knowledge and responsible action, a life in the service of unknown forces and as compensation for the loss of freedom at best a false illusory dream of material welfare in an earthly paradise which can never become a reality."

VII. The Greatness of Kierkegaard

The Hegelian system could not supply what Kierkegaard needed –

* "a truth which is true for me to find the idea for which I can live and die".

It is as though his very experiencing the abandonment of the age to the end shattered and in the shattering itself, manifested a truth which otherwise would never have come to expression. If he won an unheard of mastery over his own self, he was also condemned to a world-less loneliness, he was as though pushed out.

Kierkegaard denied himself comfort, money and public approval in the conviction that they are inferior values. Nowhere however did he suggest that such sacrifices come easily. On the contrary he would certainly agree with Spinoza who said, "If salvation lay ready to hand and could be discovered without great labour how is it possible that it should be neglected by almost everybody? All noble things are as difficult as they are rare".

Kierkegaard complained that his age was wretched for it lacked passion. He sought for the way "between the devouring of oneself as though one were the only man who had ever been and the sorry comfort of a universal human shipwreck".

Kierkegaard bequeathed to philosphy the protest against 'pure' thought and irrelevant abstraction. His recall to the permanent basis of human living in the ethical isolation of the existing individual.

Kierkegaard's works impart to "that individual" who is their true reader, the opportunity and the need of achieving himself in the sight of GOD. As the poetry of inwardness they drive their reader through the calm of contemplation into the passion of personal appropriation.

Kierkegaard was the boldest and greatest of existentialist thinkers since he elaborated in flesh and blood his formidable ‡epigram and motto calculated to make people aware-

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* Journal Aug. 1, 1835

‡ "Infandum mejubes, Regina, renovare dolorem" "Perilssem nisi Periissem"

The Contemporary Scene

VIII. Kierkegaard and Modern Existentialists

The adpotation of Kierkegaard by modern exlstentialism is a creative rather than an initiative process. But modern existentialism develops Kierkagaard's passionate affirmations, semi-poetical hints and psychological analyses into systems of theology and philosophy.

Kierkegaard is considered as the founder of Critical Existenialism. "The concept of Dread" is taken over lock, stock and barrel from Kierkegaard but developed in different directions.

a) Dialectical Theology mainly associated with Karl Barth.
b) Kantian Existentialism associated with Karl Jaspers.
c) Phenomenological existentialism developed by Husserl, Heidegeer and Sartre.
d) Social existentialism mainly due to Gabriel Marcel and Martin Baber.

Perhaps it will be developed further since Philosphizing is an act which works upon the inwardness of man, but whose final meaning he cannot know. Thus the contemporary problem is not to be deduced from some a priori whole, rather it is to be brought to consiousness out of a basis which is now experienced and out of a content still unclearly willed, philosophy as thought is always a consciousness of Being which is complete for this moment, but which knows it has no final permanence in its form of expression.

Kierkegaard's Message to the "Modern Man"

People smile at the practices of mediavel monasticism, but no monk in his cell lived so unreal a life as the 'modern man'. For while the monk withdrew from the world it never occured to him to withdraw from himself.

Kierkegaard refers to man in an industrial Society as a cipher man or a fractional man, since as an individual he

commands no respect and can have no significance. The modern individual is 'lost' in the crowd and 'at a loss' without the crowd.

Kierkegaard looks for "uncommon men" who will take the first steps towards a renascence of personal integrity.

Abstract philosphic idealism is a fashionable game that can be easily and comfortably played in the professional chair and in the lecture hall but not nearly so easily in real life, because reality and existence posit formidable obstacles, philosphic idealism expresses in the highest level the peculiar depravity of the modern age : its "dissolute pantheistic contempt for the individual man".

Kierkegaard warns us against the imminent threat of a spiritual bankruptcy. Because for an age that lacks religious and moral enthusian individual existence becomes a matter of despair.

Most of the time people find it hard to bear the thought of their own individuality, their own responsibility for their own thoughts. They suffer from 'absent mindedness'. Hence to turn a man around so that he sees himself as a concrete individual is a conversion. It is far easier to conceal this fact from himself. He will prefer to accept an explanation of the paradox rather than the paradox itself.

Occasional Sunday Glimpses into eternity are of no avail for the remaining six days of the week for it is on the week-days, in daily life and work, and in the living room, that the decisive Christian battles must be fought. The absolute demand, the absolute standard must be introduced into the life of every day and every hour and it must always be present. Kierkegaard summarizes

"Better then, frank sincerity than lukewarmness".

Existential thinking calls for the unity of thought and life. The eternal pattern of this unity Kierkegaard sees in

Christ. He therefore fervently pleads for the "following of Christ"

Christianity for Kierkegaard is essentially communication of existence.

It can only be taught "existentially" i. e. by a teacher whose life has been informed and transformed by Christ.

"Thou the holy pattern of the human race and of each individual, has left a footprint, so that, saved by Thy atonement, man might at any moment be willing to strive to follow Thee".

Criticisms and Defences

Criticism I.

The Opponents of existentialism feel that Kierkegaard and his followers face the dilemma either of conceptualizing that which cannot be conceptualized or failing altogether to communicate.

Defence I.

Sensitive to this dilemma, the existentialist seeks to use emotive language like the artist but unlike the scientist.

By masterly use of evocative language Kierkegaard attempts to make us aware of our primal subjectivity so that we may live authentically, without the crutches of antecedent social and intellectual guides.

Criticism II.

It has been alleged that Kierkegaard's freedom of choice involves deliberation among alternatives, and our freedom to choose can have no limits. This is due to the use of the phrase "a free act of imagination".

Defence II.

This phrase has been misinterpreted. It does not result from selecting among things that we might imagine. Rather it is the result of a spontaneous act of creation.

Criticism III.

Kierkegaard has criticized the philosophers of systems as (a) engaging in pointless speculations as (b) offering men the narcotic of self-delusion that inhibits them from gaining self knowledge.

To me, (a) seems to appear relevant. But I would like to criticize Kierkegaard on comment (b) I do not agree that it is only the system builders who offer a narcotic of self-delusion.

All view-points when indulged in limitlessly lend to become intoxicants. Even the existentialists view may become a representative of that clan. As the Buddhist Aryadeva says about Sunyata becoming an incurable disease if obstinately adhered to.

Defence III. (Is left open for you !)

Criticism IV.

According to Regis Jolivet the French Thomist, Klerkegaard's fundamental error lies in identifying the following two procedures :-

a) the rational demonstration of the truth of something which transcends reason.

b) the rational demonstration of the reasons for belief in something which transcends reason.

Kierkegaard's confusion, says Jolivet "is well revealed in the texts where he objects to every attempt to 'prove Christianity' and unremittingly condemns apologetics. But "apologetics does not assume the senseless task of proving mysteries : it applies itself solely to assembling and establishing the proofs of credability."

The motives of credibility "do not produce faith but they influence the soul and justify it in admitting the gift of

faith". Kierkgaard is wrong then, when he asserts that one must believe without reason and even against reason and that therefore faith is a blind "leap into the absurd".

Defence IV.

If I have understood Jolivet's criticism of Kierkgaard, then I am inclined to agree with Kierkegaard.

Jolivet's criticism seems to be meaningless (in the sense) that he has interpreted 'faith' in a different way.

Kierkegaard's intense inwardness would never want a justification of one's faith as Jolivet suggests, I personally define faith in a similar manner.

The moment one tries to bring in reason (as commonly understood) faith ceases to be.

But to reinforce the point, I add that this kind of blind faith is very difficult to come by especially amongst intellectuals (so-called & otherwise)

The counter-defence if any is left open to you .....

Criticism V :

Kierkegaard's views reflect his unfortunate personality and arise due to his doctrine of choice. He cannot produce pure intellectual conviction in his readers; all he can do is confront them with choices. Hence he should not try to present a single position.

Defence V :

Modern psychoanalysis has labelled Kierkegaard as " a neurotic " but how far that can be said to be verified, I cannot say. Anyhow the tragedy of the man does not ruin the validity of his thought even though it is distorted by such excesses. Even if his own will were deficient and supplicated his thought for punishment, he was a demonaic will to the irreplaceable importance of the reflective will to choose the self absolutely and thus originate a life worthy to be called human, authentic.

Besides I think that behind most great works of genius there lurks an unfortunate personality. Perhaps the conditioning is at times necessary not necessarily biased.

Criticism VI

Kierkegaard never took seriously the question of the nature of contradiction and hence he never explained the difference if any between paradox (in his sense of the word) and mere inconsistency.

Defence VI

I think there is some confusion in the above between a " logical " concept and a " non logical " one. How can we compare " a contradiction " (applied to logical systems) with a paradox (applied by Kierkegaard to existential events)

However the question of any link between the logical and existential world is taken up by me later on.

Criticism VII

Lack of clarity is increased by Kierkegaard's failure to distinguish between philosophy and Hegelianism. Kierkegaard seems to have thought that any philosphy that claims objectivity must consist solely of tautologies.

Defence VII

Is left open to you.

Criticism VIII

There are 2 fundamental questions which arise with respect to ' doctrine of choice '.

a) Are there criterionless choices ?
b) Is it by such that we either can or do arrive at our criteria of true belief ?
c) Seems to arise only in special cases (choosing lottery tickets) or arise from conflicts of duties, in which each alternative is equally weighted. These do not seem to have ' objective criteria ' but appear to be enternally related to relevant beliefs, judgements etc.

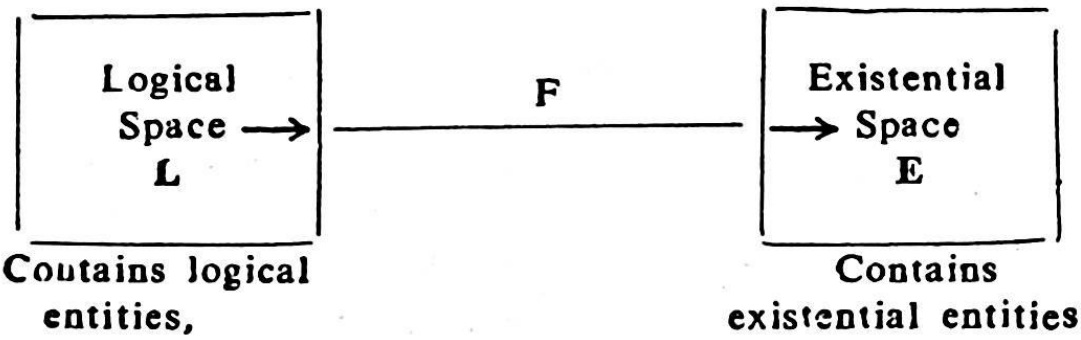
We cannot choose our ultimate criteria in mathematics, but what about morals and religion ? It appears as though Kiearkegaard's fundamental positions must remain doubtful until such questions have been systematically answered.

(Original copyright below)

Note :

With respect of Defence VI can we define a ' logico-existential ' morphism.

I am attempting to define a function F which preserves " operations in logical space " in suspension to " events in existential space. "



Under what conditions can the function F operate ?

Successfully so as to preserve the logical operations in space ' L ' to existential operations in space ' E '

Will our " logic " (3 dimensional) work ?

Do I add the 4th dimension ?

It would be straying far from the essay topic to discuss above in detail.

However if the reader is interested or preferably has criticicisms and suggestions on the above matter please proceed, to contact the writer.

An Encounter with Kierkegaard (My view).

I spent many evenings with Kierkegaard, I walked in the rain with Kierkegaard, I wept in silence with Kierkegaard.

All this may appear to be the remorse of a young woman over contingent facts ..... I do not think so !

Kierkegaard in his emotive language struck me more than the usual academic philosopher.

My predicament a singularity there was the... Either/Or.

I still recall the frightful noises of thunder clasps and lightening shrieks. The rain that pours on relentlessly ..... perhaps in passion too. Can I but recall the slight figure with Kierkegaard ? Yes ! we walked together, along the

'Way of the Cross.' His Motto 'periissem nisi periissem' became my pass-word.

I called out with him in the darkness, "Infandum me, renovare dolorem" (thou biddest me, renew an speakable grief). My cause all lost to the wind..... .....drunk with desolation were the footsteps.....my journey towards the early grave.

I am inclined to cling on to Kierkegaard .....to follow parallel paths – but I wonder if I will have the courage or more rightly I may perceive that the cost is too dear.

I prefer to the case of "non-committment to any fixed view" – as Sunyavadins may recommend.

When my mind is overcome by the "analytic training" it has received over long years of study in mathematics-the so-called rational moments–one is inclined to agree with the psychoanalyst and consider Kierkegaard as a "case of extreme neurosis". Perhaps the psychoanalyst is right.

Kierkegaard may have been just a victim of trauma and sorrow who over-reacted and does not point to the "truth" but mere melancholy and sentimental morbidity. Does it matter to me?

I think it should matter only upto the point that Kierkegaard made his appearance into my life at an appropriate stage - the existential crisis.

Whether the future in an existential pathos and I become an intoxicated singer in the sands of eternity like the lone phantom..... OR ..... the so-called analysis and rationality claims its forte and I work in the "inauthentic" realm (as Kierkegaard calls).

I do not know the answer.....

But my view is expressed in the following lines :-

> "That the existentialists and analysts will get together is not likely. But if the feat of Socrates is really to be repeated and philosophy is to have a future outside the academics there will have to be philospers who think in the tension between analysis and existentialism".

The Cloud of Unknowing : An Analysis

Motilal Pandit

The identity of the author of The Cloud of Unknowing has not so far been established; but this much is certain, that he was an English monk who lived round about the second half of the 14th century.

The attraction and beauty of this book lies in its ethos and sublimity. The writers' deep and sympathetic understanding shows itself when he deals with abstruse matters without falling into the trap of abstraction. He never evades the realities of concrete human situation. He clearly tells in the first chapter of the book that, while writing the book, he has only one aim : to lay down some instructions for a disciple whose aim was to reach the height of spirituality. It should, therefore, be kept in mind that the book is not meant for the common man, but only for those who have a definite contemplative vocation. " Seest thou not how sweetly and how graciously he hath privily pulled thee to the third degree and manner of living, the which is called singular ? " * And he continues :

> In the which solitary form and manner of living thou mayest learn to lift up the foot of thy love, and to step toward the state and degree of living that is perfect, and the last state of all (Ch. . p.4).

It is necessary, in order to lead a fruitful contemplative life, to live a solitary existence, and this the author makes clear in the Prologue of the book. He emphatically says that his teachings are suited only to those who have a vocation to this kind of life, that is, a life which is completely lived in deep solitude and contemplation. Contemplation, according

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* Page references are to Dom Justin McCann's edition, Burns and Oates. 1934.

to the author, does not simply consist in doing good things; it is to be cultivated. The author gives us a beautiful exposition of the way a contemplative life is to be lived. In the Prologue the author insists that this work is meant for those who have totally given themselves to God. This mode of life consists of in practising contemplation in depth. The whole doctrine of contemplation of the author is based on the teachings of the fifth century mystic : Denis the Areopagite.

Denis found that the human understanding of God was inadequate in the sense that God was understood in human terms. We say that God is good precisely because this understanding is based on ordinary human experience. Denis informs us that we must recognise the limitations of our intellectual grasp in the sense that the transcendent God cannot be fathomed through the use of mere reason. To try to understand God through the excercise of the intellect will always fall short of reality. But the main end and goal of our existence is to achieve union with God. This union is not achieved in the intellect, but in the highest point of Spirit. Thomas Gallus, a 13th century commentator of Denis, tells us that the way to achieve union with God is is supra-intellectual. It is not the intellect which is the highest cognitive faculty, but he calls the higher will (principalis affectio) or the spark of conscience (scintilla synderesis). In this process of union memory, will, imagination, and reason have no role to play; they are to be suspended.

This doctrine of the supra-intellect also influenced the school of St. Bernard and St. Bonaventura. Their interpretation of the doctrine differs in this : they insist that the union does not simply consist in the super-intellect; it is rather the uninon of love, of the will. "Love knocks and enters, but knowledge stands without". It is a mysticism of darkness. In other words, the knowledge of God in contemplation is far removed from the ordinary mode of knowledge of God, and therefore is spoken of as "unknowing". The consequences of this doctrine are far reaching. It means that in order to

achive union with God, we have to suspend all discursive thinking. It is for this reason that this doctrine is known as the cloud of unknowing. To strive consciously for union with God is, according to our author, to enter into the cloud of unknowing.

However, it must be kept in mind that man cannot achieve union with God simply by his own efforts. Man can only simplify the object of intellect by directing love to it in contemplation. It is to be noted that human efforts cannot command contemplation. Man only prepares himself for it by entering into the cloud of forgetting. Hence the main and immediate concern of the treatise of the cloud is to prepare man for this task, that is, how to enter into the state of forgetting.

The cloud of forgetting is an exercise which the contemplative has to practise daily for several hours. In order to enter into this state of contemplation, the cultivation of virtues is necessary.

Keeping all these points in view, we may now look at some important passages of the Cloud. The author describes the work or the actual time for contemplation in these words :

> Lift up thine heart unto God with a meek stirring of love; and mean himself and none of his goods. And thereto look that thou loathe to think on aught but himself, so that nought work in thy mind nor in thy will but only himself (Ch. 3, p. 5).

Hence, in contemplation, one must concentrate, without any distraction, on the simple being of God :

> And, therefore, when you purposest thee to this work, and feelest by grace that thou art called by God lift up thine heart upto God with a meek stirring of love. And mean God that made thee, and brought thee, and graciously hath called thee to thy degree; and receive non other thought of God. And yet not all these, except thou desirest; for a naked intent directed unto God, without any other cause than himself, sufficeth wholly.

> And if thou desirest to have this intent lapped on and folden in one word, so that thou mayest have better hold thereupon, take thee but a little word of one syllable, for so it is better than of two; for the shorter the word, the better it accordeth with the work of the spirit. And such a word is this word God or this word Love. Choose whichever thou wilt, or another; whatever word thou likest best of one syllable. And fasten this word to thine heart, so that it may never go thence for anyting that befalleth (Ch. 7, p. 13).

Whenever we think of God, we must never do it in terms of intellectual categories or reasoning. No discursive method is to be employed in contemplation. The author makes it quite clear by saying :

> As oft as I say 'all the creatures that ever be made' (are to be eliminated), so oft do I mean, not only the creatures themselves, but also all the works and conditions of the same creatures.I except not one creature, whether they be bodily creatures or ghostly; nor yet any condition or work of any creature, whether they be good or evil. But, to speak shortly, all should be hid under the cloud of forgetting in this case (Ch. 5, p. 11).

The author of the Cloud maintains, with strict rigour, that meditation, being fundamentally a discursive method of thinking, hinders the soul from entering the cloud of forgetting. Hence he gives a practical advice :

> And therefore, although it be good sometimes to think on the goodness and worthiness of God in special, and although it be a light and a part of contemplation; never the less in this work it shall be cast down and covered with a cloud of forgetting (Ch. 6, p. 12).

> The sharp stirring of thine understanding that will always press upon thee when thou settest thee to this blind work, must always be borne down; and unless thou bear him down, he will bear thee down. Insomuch that when you weenest best to abide in this darkness, and that nought is

> in thy mind but only God, if thou look wisely thou shalt find thy mind not occupied in this darkness, but in a clear beholding of something beneath God (Ch. 9, p. 17).

The purpose of contemplation is to seek not an experience of God. Contemplation means to be in the presence of God. The main purpose of the treatise is :

> ..nought else but a naked intent directed unto God himself, A intent I call it. Because in this work a perfect prentice asketh neither releasing of pain, nor increasing of reward, nor nought but himself. Insomuch, that he neither recketh nor regardeth whether he be in pain or in bliss, but only that his will be fulfilled whom he loveth. And thus it seemeth that in this work God is perfectly loved for himself, and above all creatures (Ch. 24, p. 36).

The pecularity of this exercise is that it produces virtues, and in one place the author writes :

> It (the cloud of unknowing) destroyeth not only the ground and root of sin, as it may be here, but also it getteth virtues. For it, if it be truly conceived, all virtues shall be subtly and perfectly conceived, felt, and comprehended in it, without any mingling of thine intent. And have a man never so many virtues without it, all they be mingled with some crooked intent, for the which they be imperfect (Ch 12, p. 22).

The two most outstanding virtues, which result from this exercise, are humility and charity. In Chapter 13 the author deals extensively with the virtue of humility. The virtue humility consists in knowing oneself in relation to God and other men. The author points out the two ways which enable one to acquire this virtue. The first method is natural in that man, by making use of his reason, may reach to a point of awareness whereby he comes to know his sinfulness and creatureliness. The second way of achieving humility is entirely supernatural. This kind of humility results from an actual encounter or experience with God. In this experience

man receives a knowledge of God which is of a higher quality and which cannot be compared to the earthly knowledge. When the soul understands the true nature of the goodness of God in this mystical experience, it forgets everything, 'and in this time it is perfectly meeked, for it knoweth and feeleth no cause but the chief.' It is a humility which is of a deeper kind than the one which is acquired through natural reason. Humility is not something which one can acquire at will. Man has to strive for it till it is given to him. Without humility no advance can be made in spiritual life.

As far as austerities are concerned, the author is very discreet and cautious. If this exercise, which our author advocates, is followed unremittingly, detachment from the things of senses will automatically result.

> But peradventure thou askest me how thou shall govern thee discreetly in meat, in drink, and in sleep, and in all those other. And hereto I think to answer thee right shortly: "Get what thou canst get" (in the sense of 'Take what come'). Do this work (striving for contemplation in the way prescribed) evermore without ceasing and without discretion and thou shalt know well how to begin and cease in all other works with a great discretion. For I cannot believe that a soul continuing in this work night and day without discretion may err in any of these outward doings; and else methinketh that he should always err. (Ch. 42, p.54).

What is the subject matter of the Cloud? It is, in the words of the author, the special "work"; in other words, spiritual exercise, an excercise which leads the soul into the state of forgetting. It is a method of contemplation in which the activities of the intellect, though not elliminated, are reduced to the minimum. It does not mean that the soul has to be passive. The goal of the soul is to be united with the Source of being. But this union cannot be achieved simply through one's own efforts. This union is achieved through the self-revelation of that Being who is the source of all beings.

Gurudev Birth Centenary Year, 1986

This new year dawns reminding the devotees and disciples of Gurudev Ranade, the auspicious event of Gurudev's Birth Centenary. The following pages of Pathway to God are devoted to the articles by eminent persons who surrendered themselves to the all-embracing affectionate Philosopher and Guide. We are sure that these will inspire others to contribute similar writings for the forthcoming numbers. Academy of Comparative Philosophy and Religion will highly appreciate such endeavour of Gurudev's devotees.

— Editor.

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Ranade's Perdecessors in the Theory of Asymptotism

S. G. Tulpule

While discussing the original contribution of Saint Jnanadeva to the philosophy of mysticism, R. D. Ranade has pointed out his doctrine of Asymptotism. The word 'asymptote' is a mathematical term meaning "A curve and an axis approaching each other infinitely and meeting at infinity" or "A line that continually approaches a curve, but never meets it. "What we find in the case of an aspiring mystic is that he goes on asymptotically approaching God. That is Jnanadeva's doctrine is certainly very original. Ranade makes two points in this regard. One is 'asymptotic reallsation' and the other is 'the doctrine that perfection can be attained only gradually'. With regard to the first, he says,

> "Instead of there being a final and perfect identity between the mystic and God, the mystic moves towards God and so we may say that he meets God at infinity. There is just a little difference between them. Just as there is difference between the moon of the fourteenth day and the full-moon of the fifteenth day, or just as gold of fifteen carats just falls short of gold of sixteen carats, to that extent only does the devotee fall short of full divine attainment. As one can distinguish between the sea and the river by the stillness and the motion of the waters, similarly in the case of God and devotee also we can make a slight distinction. 'The devotee attains to the Godhead, falling just short of His entire Being' (Jna. 18.1087-90). The reason for this approximation or asymptotic realisation is the physical, the mental and other limitations of the mystic. So long as he has a body and a mind and has to live in the world, to that extent and till that time he must fall short of

complete divine attainment. (Says Jnanadeva) : " Even though the devotee may reach unison with God, yet he remains a devotee. The saint remains a saint so long as he has to discharge his bodily functions ". (Jna. 7.114, 117.)[1]

With regard to the second point that Ranade has made, his observations are as follows.

" Jñānesvara further proceeds to talk of the gradual and graduated perfection in the mystic. It is the time factor that counts. A man who starts on his journey must not expect to reach the end at once. There is bound to be a time interval between initiation and realisation. A Sādhaka who gets himself initiated by a teacher must work and wait for attaining realisation and therefore liberation. It will require a good deal of time before he conquers his mind and intellect, devotes himself entirely to God, makes possible some definite attainment in that line and ultimately achieves divine realisation. So, initiation and realisation should not be spoken of in the same breath. Perfection is only gradual. साधु कि संगत गुरुजी की सेवा, बनत बनत बनि आइ रे, Says Mirābāi. A gardener might sprinkle water upon the trees and the plants, but it is only after the spring sets in that the trees and plants bear fruit. Also Jnānes'vara here makes a fine remark that the great God S'amkara Himself is only a pilgrim journeying on the spiritual path, जये मार्गीचा कापडी महेश अझनी. He has just made an approximation to the infinitude of God; and if this happens in the case of God S'amkara, far more must it happen in the case of us small mortals.

" Granted that all the preparation is made for the realisation of God, that one meets the Guru, that the Guru imparts to him the knowledge of the true path; granted that the seed that is sown is the the best of its kind, yet it is only in coure of time that a rich harvest can be reaped. ")— (Jñā. 18. 996-1003).[2]

Ranade has thus given the entire credit of the theory of asymptotism to Saint Jnanadeva. But it would be interesting to see if Jnanaveda himself had any predecessors, or successors, or contemporaries in this field of mystical thought. Going back historically, we first find the English poet, philosopher and critic, S. T. Coleridge, making use of the metaphor of an asymptote while discussing the nature of the 'Spirit of God'. In a letter dated October 13, 1806 and addressed to Thomas Clarkson, he writes :

> "The incommunicable attribute of self-comprehension (or 'self-realising intuition' as called by him elsewhere) is at once man's self-comprehension and his God-comprehension to which all creatures make approaches such as the geometricians figure to us in the demonstration of Asymptotes."[3]

Thus, Coleridge seems to be the latest exponent of the theory of Asymptotism. Before him we find Nicholas of Cusa arriving at the same conclusion as Jnanadeva did. But his argument is different. According to him, "it is possible for man to 'be' God humane, so far as it is possible for man to participate in the divine essence".[4] Plato had the same doctrine of Approximation in his mind when he spoke of the idea of the Good as the highest attainable peak of Reality to which all other ideas make continuous approach by grades.

It is interesting to note that similar thoughts belonged to Confucius, the Chinese philosopher-saint, who lived in the fifth century B.C. They are expressed by his grand-son, Tsu Ssu, in his 'Doctrine of the Mean' while writing about the philosophy of 'Cheng' which is only an explanation of Confucius's principle of Zen. 'Cheng' is the ultimate Reality, not abstract but concrete. Confucius had treated 'Zen' as the highest quality which could be acquired by the means of 'Cheng'. 'Cheng' is not only infinite but it is the very principle of infinity. Raising a question, "How can the finite man attain the infinite Cheng?", Tsu Ssu answers as follows :

> "Cheng is actually to be reached only by the sage, but it is the business of the ordinary man, essential to his

developement as a moral being, to seek and strive with all his faculties to approach it. It is true that the path of this approach, though convergent, is endless-asymptotic, like the mathematical straight-line that draws ever nearer to a curve yet never meets it. There is no need for dismay on that account, however, for the path is rich in compensation and promise. "Let man proceed in this way", says Tsu Ssu, "and though dull, he will surely become intelligent; though weak, he will surely become strong."[5]

We thus see that all these great mystics belonging to different lands and different times agree on this point. It is surprising that they all make use of the same metaphor, namely that of the asymptote. It is because their experience is one and the same. As Heracleitos says, "those who are awake have one common world : those who are asleep, each a different world". It is the unity of their spiritual experience that makes these different mystics like Confucius, Plato, Nicholas of Cusa, Saint Jnanadeva and Ranade speak alike. The entire thought has been very succinctly expressed by Ranade when he says that "God-realisation is a continuous process, and not an event". If God is really infinite, *ananta*, any statement to the effect of having experienced Him fully and finally would be within the limits of definiteness. Even a very ripe and mature experience of God would be only the 'endless end'.

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Spiritual Twins

R. P. (Ramanna) Kulkarni

' Jealousy is the last evil to remove from human mind; and more so the emancipation of spiritual jealousy'. Shri Baba (Amburao Maharaj) was completely immune of such an evil. He was ' Sthitaprajna ', was remark made by Shri Gurudeo (Dr. R. D. Ranade) in one of his sittings at Nimbal Ashram about fifteen years after the passing away of shri Baba. This remark of Shri Gurudeo throws a flood of light on the unsullied interrelations of both of them.

Unity in diversity :

There was very little common in their worldly life. It was conspicuous more by its diversity than by its unity. Shri Baba was born of a very poor rural family. He was brought up in the rural atmosphere. Shri Gurudeo was born of an urban and well-to-do family of an officer in the then Jamkhandi State. He was brought up in an urban atmosphere. Their educational qualifications were poles apart. Shri Baba had passed the 4th Std. of rural Pantoji school at Nimbargi. Shri Gurudeo was a great scholar and a Chancellor's gold medalist. Shri Baba had tasted the bitter fruits of poverty from his-childhood whereas Shri Gurudeo was born with a silver spoon in his mouth. There was nothing common between Shri Baba and Shri Gurudeo not even age nor health. There was an age-difference of thirty years between them. Shri Baba was hale, healthy and robust. He could climb the Khandoba hill at Jejuri even at the age of 76. But Shri Gurudeo had a very delicate health. He had always an umbrella in his hand to protect himself from wind and sun.

Shri Baba had very little contacts of the world outside Jigjevani and Inchageri. You will be surprised to read that he did not know what the newspapers were. But Shri Gurudeo had his education in Jamkhandi and Pune. Being a student

of the Deccan College, he had his contacts with European Principals and Professors. He had seen the-world at large. Inspite of the absence of the worldly common cord to bind them, there was unity in this diversity.

The Eternal Cord :

The secret of their unity was the intultive power which lay hidden in both of them. This intuition, which lies at the back of human intellect, emotion and will, was equally on par with each other. They were the devoted disciples of the same Guru-Shri Bhausaheb Maharaj Umadikar. They both walked on the-same path of meditation of the NAMA. Self realisation, while living and through living, was the only aim of both of them The power of the immortal spirit (Atman) was the eternal cord that bound them together. They were like two overflowing adjacent lakes, waters of one overflowing into the other. So when water mixes with water, where lies the difference and much so the diversity ?

First Meeting :

Shri Baba was ten years senior to Shri Gurudeo in spiritual life also. He was initiated in the year 1891 while Shri Gurudeo came into the fold of Maharaj in 1901. Though Shri Gurudeo was ten years junior to himself, Shri Baba treated him like his spiritual twin brother. Shri Gurudeo came to Inchageri Math for the First time in 1909. Shri Gurudeo, was ailing with serious illness when introduced to Shri Baba by Maharaj. He told Shri Baba to take care of him till he was in the math. Baba had already recognized the spiritual potentiality in Gurudeo and the same was confirmed when Maharaj orderered him to look after him. Shri Gurudeo lived in Shri Baba's room only. Shri Gurudeo realised the spiritual attainments and achievements of Shri Baba in no time. Baba on his part discerned the spiritual power that was hidden in Shri Gurudeo. There was an intuitional qualitative identity of both.

Direct Contact :

During the life time of Shri Maharaj, Baba was always a back-bencher, though a great scholar in spriritual know-

ledge. When Maharaj, passed away in January 1914, the two came so closer together that Shri Gurudeo began to see Maharaj in Shri Baba and Baba on his part saw in Gurudeo, the spiritual power required to continue efficiently the Sampradaya after himself.

Shri Gurudeo in his condolence letter to Shri Karkhanis after the passing away of Shri Baba, made it clear what he saw in Baba :-

" There was a great identity of interest and life between the Maharaj and Baba. When Baba was left over to us, it was as if we were seeing and hearing Maharaj, —— As with Maharaj so with - Baba. Their life and death have been sublime illustrations of a perpetual communion....."

On the passing away of Maharaj, Gurudeo used to write to Baba with the same devotion and respect as he showed towards Maharaj. But Baba also, in the same spirit of a spiritual brother, - responded to his correspondence. He treated Gurudeo with the same respect he deserved as his successor to continue the spiritual path. In his letter dated 17-5-1914, Gurudeo wrote to Baba—

" ..... Unless there comes an opportunity of spending some days in your company, there is no possibility of progress in Sadhana. I was extremely glad to see that you shower grace on ignorant persons like us. If any mistakes are committed consciously or unconsciously, it is for Samartha to forgive them."

His another letter of 10-10-1919 bespeaks of his high regard for his senior spiritual brother-Shri Baba. He writes :

" ..... when a realised soul (Atmajnani) like you is at our back, there is no doubt that even small men can do great things..... "

This unsullied attitude of Shri Gurudeo towards Baba continued unto the last.

Atmanic experiences are varied, innumerable and unfathomable. Different Sadhakas may get different spiritual experi-

ences. Common place Sadhaka is prone to jealousy at the spiritual experiences of his brother Sadhaka. This spiritual jealousy is undiscernible. This evil never touched Shri Baba. Baba was always overjoyed to see that Shri Gurudeo had experiences of some highest order. He used to appreciate and encourage Gurudeo, by asking him to initiate the aspirants who came and sought spiritual guidance from him (Gurudeo).

Once Shri Gurudeo told Baba a peculiar spiritual experience of high order and sought his explanation. Baba was extremely glad to hear the same and explained to him the importance of his experience. Shri Gurudeo has referred to this incident in his Pathway to God in Kannada Literature on page 113.

"..... I had got certain experiences and I could not account for them because there was nobody to explain to me; the books could not tell me. But he (Shri Baba) knew and gave me an insight in the meaning of the song....."

From the above, it may be seen that there was an identity of interest between Shri Baba and Shri Gurudeo. There was an indentity in their ideals. As such there was an identity of Spirit, though there seemed diversity in their outward life.

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How I Met My Guru

N. S. Metrani

Since long, I was thinking of contributing an article to the magazine "Pathway to God" regarding the Guru I met and my association with him; but I could not do it, partly due to my professional engagements and partly due to my indifferent health. The Chairman of the Academy of Comparative Philosophy and Religion, Belgaum, Shri. J. V. Parulekar, however, prevailed upon me to contribute it as early as possible so as to enable him to publish it in the next issue of the journal.

Being in the Judicial Department since 25-5-1936, I was liable to be transferred from place to place. When I was serving at Bagalkot in Bijapur District as II Class Subordinate Judge between 1942 and 1945, I received an order from the High-Court of Bombay, as it was then known, transferring me to Athani in Belgaum District. I tried to avoid that place, but could not succeed. The transfer, however, proved to be a blessing in disguise for two reasons : the first was that I happened to meet my future Guru there and the second was that I was promoted as Assistant Judge and transferred to Bijapur.

While, at Athani, I used to stay in a rented house outside the town. My neighbours were Dr. Bilur, Shri. M. S. Deshpande and Shri. K. D. Sangoram, Pleader, a disciple of Amburao Maharaj. In about the year 1946 or so, one fine morning, Shri. Sangoram came to my house and told me that Gurudev Ranade had come from Sangli and stopped at his, on his way to his Ashram at Nimbal, and requested me to visit his house for Arati and Prasaad. I readily agreed and went to his house and happened to see Gurudev Ranade for the first time. Quite a bright, resplendent and attractive figure with deep penetrating eyes. I offered him my salutations with all

reverence and respect at which he merely smiled and asked me to sit by his side. We chatted for some time. After the Arati was over and Prasad was distributed, I wended my way to my house and after food I attended the Court as usual.

After Athani, I was transferred to Bijapur, Poona and Kolhapur as Assistant Judge and from Kolhapur to Ratnagiri as District Judge in March 1954. When in Poona, I also officiated as District Judge for some time. I was again transferred to Bijapur from Ratnagiri in June 1954 as District Judge.

While at Bijapur, Shri. R. S. Ambekar, who was District Judge at Ahmednagar, met me in my bungalow in the latter part of 1954 and told me that Justice Shri. Y. V. Dixit of the Bombay High Court had expressed his desire to visit Bijapur for sight-seeing and that I should go to Bombay and extend my invitation personally to Justice Shri. Y. V. Dixit to visit Bijapur. I agreed and accordingly I went to Bombay and stayed with Shri. M. S. Patil, who was formerly my District Judge at Belgaum, when I was at Athani, and then a Member of the Bombay Public Service Commission.

After dinner, Shri M S. Patil and I chatted on various subjects. I was aware that he was a great devotee of Sai Baba of Shirdi. I casually asked him how he was attracted towards Sai Baba. He narrated to me several incidents in his life which convinced him about the spiritual ascent of the saint and influenced him to visit Sai Baba's Shrine as many times as it was possible for him to do. I too was impressed about the unseen saint and thought that I should also be his devotee and invoke his blessings after going to Shirdi, which I had not visited before. After the chat, we went to bed.

On the following morning, at about 5, I had vision in which my future Guru, i. e., Gurudev Ranade, whom I had clean forgotten and never thought of him after I met him at Athani in about the year 1946 for the first time, appeared and gave me a coconut. This came as a great surprise to me. I began to ponder over the vision very seriously and anxiously. I could not know what it indicated.

Later, I contacted Justice Shri. Y. V. Dixit on phone and took an appointment and met him at his residence and requested him to visit Bijapur, which he readily agreed to do. Thereafter, within a fortnight or so, he visited Bijapur and stayed with me as my guest for some days and did the sight-seeing and Court inspection too.

In the meantime, I had sent for Shri. S. D. Dabade, who was a disciple of Gurudev Ranade and a retired Sheristedar of the District Court, Bijapur, and told him about the vision I had in Bombay. He suggested that we should go to Nimbal and seek enlightenment on the vision from Gurudev Ranade. I accepted his suggestion with alacrity and went to Nimbal the next Sunday. That was for the first time I visited Nimbal, though I had served twice at Muddebihal, Bagalkot and Bijapur before. I went to Bijapur as District Judge for the third time (I went to Bijapur on deputation from Muddebihal for two months 1937, as District Judge in June 1954). I met Gurudev Ranade and narrated to him how I came to have the vision in which he had offered me a coconut. He smiled and old me : " अहो आम्ही तुम्ही एक झालो. तुम्ही इकडे येत चला ". (Look here, you and I have become one. You keep on coming here). Although these words were pregnant with meaning and very significant too, I paid no serious attention to them. After some time, Shri. Dabade and I left Nimbal for Bijapur with the blessings of Gurudev Ranade. I did visit Nimbal thereafter once. I remember that on that occasion I went there along with Dr.K.N.Katju, the Defence Minister, and Shri. B.N. Datar, the Deputy Home Minister, in the Central Government, both of whom were well-known to Gurudev Ranade.

Days passed on at Bijapur without any significant event. Some of the disciples of Gurudev Ranade at Bijapur tried to induce me to get myself initiated by Gurudev Ranade, but being mortally afraid of the very term 'initiation', I refused to fall in line with them. I told them that I would think of it only after my retirement from service. I thought that it was something which made me to abandon my family

and family life and, perhaps, service, and devote all my time in Bhajan, Pooja etc., for which I was not prepared. I had a large family consisting of four sons and six daughters, among whom my eldest daughter alone was married and the rest were attending either Colleges or Schools. Being burdened with a heavy responsibility to maintain my old parents, I had to say nay to being initiated.

On Saturdays, the Courts at Bijapur were being held in the morning from 8-30. A. M. to 12-:0 P. M. during Summer. On one of these Saturdays in 1955, I attended the Court as usual and returned home at about 1 P. M After food, I was having a nap. I had again a vision in which an Astrologer appeared with a pugree (head-wear) on his head told me that I would die within six days A pleader, who was present along with the Astrolger, told me that what the Astrologer was saying was true. Later on, I came to know that this Pleader Shri. Gokhale, who was practising at the Bijapur Bar. was the son of a disciple of Bhausaheb Maharaj, the Guru of Gurudev Ranade. There can be no doubt that my future Guru appeared in the guise of an Astrologer and issued a stern warning to me. One can very well imagine my death within six days. I was terribly frightened. The thought of my large family and the responsibilities I had to discharge stared me in the face. I thought that not only I was doomed but also the members of my family were doomed. I informed my parents about the vision. They too felt sad and helpless. I again sent for Shri. S. D. Dabade and told him about the vision. After discussion, we ultimately decided to meet Gurudev Ranade the next day morning to get the implications of the vision cleared up.

The next day, which happened to be Sunday, Shri. Dhabade and I together drove to Nimbal in my car and met Gurudev Ranade, and I told him about the vision I had on the previous day. He smiled and told me :
" अहो, ते पूर्वीचे मेत्राणी मरणार आणि नवीन मेत्राणी जन्माला येणार आणि सहा दिवसांत त्याना नाम मिळणार". (Look here, the former Metrani will be no more and a new Metrani will be born and he will

be initiated within six days). I heaved a deep sigh of relief and prayed him to initiate me as early as possible. He, however, asked me to meet him the next Thursday which was the sixth day on or before which I was to die according to the Astrologer's prediction.

Shri. Dabade and I together went to Nimbal on Thursday morning. It is difficult to find a medium through whom the Mantra or Nam is given by the Guru. Luckily for me, Padmashri Kakasheb Karkhanis, a Gurubandhu of Gurudev Ranade, happened to be present at Nimbal on that day and the initation ceremony was gone through. Thus died the old Metrani and a new Metrani was born as a result of the initiation and blessings of Gurudev Ranade.

It cannot be gainsaid that Gurudev Ranade was a GOD-realised Soul. I understand that,although he had the realistion and authority to initiate disciples in about the year 1918, he started initiating them only after the demise of his senior Guru Bandhu Shri. Amburao Maharaj in about the year 1933. It is only those who were fortunate enough had the chance of being initiated by such a GOD-reaslised soul. Gurudev Ranade refused to initiate even the best of his friends whom he considered unworthy or unfit. In my case, however, I was extremely lucky in being initiated after undergoing the trials and tribulations which I have narrated above. In the beginning, I was reluctant and flatly refused to be initiated by Gurudev Ranade. The spectre of initiation haunted me and hence I turned a deaf ear, but, under the guise of an Astrologer, Gurudev Ranade compelled me to get myself initiated without waiting for my retirement from service.

I am not at all sorry for the step I was compelled to take, It is obvious that my Guru had spotted me out long ago as a fit person for initiation and hence he would not allow me to waver and have my own way. Since the initiation, whatever angularities I had have been completely removed and I have attained peace of mind which is absolutely necessary as the age advances. I breathe an atmosphere which is entirely different

from the one I used to breathe before initiation. I came in very close contact with my Guru and I found in him a true friend, guide and philosopher. He put me on the right path and solved my problems and saved me from several calamities. He was, indeed, an intellectual and spiritual giant and moulded the destiny of not only myself but also of sevral others who were groping in the dark. Every disciple, who came in contact with him, thought that he was his (Gurudev's) favoured pet. His attitude and behaviour towards his disciples was like that of a parent. It was a treat to hear his discourses on philosophy, spiritualism, religion and mysticism. One could see that he had the spiritual experiences of the great Saints of yore. He had to his credit several books on philosophy, spiritualism, religion and mysticism, and he used to say that he had the spiritual experiences of the Saints whose books he had read or studied and that the same could be found in his books, articles etc. Indeed, a mighty colossus! Even then he was unassuming, soft spoken and a beacon light to those who had lost their way or entangled themselves in the stormy sea of life.

I had the proud privilege of receiving Gurudev Ranade in my bungalow at Bijapur while he, along with his wife and about 50 disciples, was on his way from Nimbal to Jamakhandi for his Amrit Mahotsava celebration which was arranged by his disciples. He stayed with me for about an hour during which all the disciples, who were my Gurubandhus were treated to tea etc. Gurudev himself prepared his own tea. I had taken care to keep five packets of choicest tea powder and five packets of sugar. Milk was seperately kept. Out of the packets of tea and sugar, he picked up only those packets on which he could see Jyoti (light) and prepared the tea, out of which I received one cup of tea from his hand. Another stroke of luck !

Before I conclude, I deem it necessary to refer to only one incident, among others, which speaks volumes of the height which Gurudev had reached. I should like to make it clear that he never believed in miracles, but they did happen

for the benefit of the humanity. In my case, one such miracle happened and I would like to refer to it for the benefit of the Sadhakas and the general public. While at Bijapur, I was suffering from a peculiar ailment which I thought would lead to paralysis. There was continuous tingling sensation in my right hand, which rendered me uneasy and uncomfortable. I suffered from it for about a couple of months and spent a lot over it. I tried all sorts of medicines prescribed by the physicians and quacks too, but to no purpose. Every morning my Court Chopdar, who secured the medical help and medicines for me, used to enquire how I felt, but as expected, my reply to him was that there was no relief. One day, I came to learn that Gurudev Ranade and the Vice Chancellor of the Karnataka University Shri. D. C. Pawate, who happened to be my friend, were camping in the Guest House of Shri. Ankalikar's Ginning Factory near the Bijapur Station. Being a disciple, I decided to call on Gurudev Ranade at the Guest House and accordingly went there at about 9 a. m. As I was approaching the Guest House, both Gurudev Ranade and Sri. D. C. Pawate were found emerging from the Guest House and proceeding towards the car which was waiting for them at some distance. I met them on the way and paid my respects. Gurudev Ranade smiled and caught hold of my right hand, which was ailing, and asked me how I was doing. I said that by his grace I was alright. After he caught hold of my right hand and shook it, I found that the tingling completely disappeared and I was relieved of the malady from which I was suffering for a pretty long time. Even the touch of a Guru is potent and works wonders !

After meeting Gurudev Ranade and getting rid of the malady I went home and informed the members of my family about the instant cure. They were overjoyed. Then I attended the Court and when the Chopdar put the usual question regarding my tingling sensation, I told him that my Guru's handshake had done the trick and I was completely cured. He too was surprised and overjoyed. Can the medical profession or scientists explain this phenomenon ?

There were several other events in which my Guru figured very prominently and lent me a helping hand. Further, he solved many a knotty problem of mine with which I was beset. I am strictly following the injunctions issued by him. I am completely at peace. I command no adequate terms to express my gratitude to him for shaping my destiny. I have been serving him faithfully in my own humble way and I will continue to do it till the end unflinchingly.

Grace of the Guru

How is it Possible, when the Grace of the Guru comes down in floods that the scarching heat of Samsāra may continue to burn one with grief ? The grace of the Guru, like a true mother, rears up the spiritual aspirant, on the lap of Ādhāra Shakti, and swings him to and fro,in the cradle of the heart; like a true mother, again, the grace of the Guru waves lights of spiritual illumination before the aspirant, and puts on him the ornaments of spiritual gold.

– Gurudeo

Supernatural Telepathy ! or....

V. V. Ranade.

Some time in the year 1923, I moved to Nimbal, where Gurudeo Rande was putting at Nadgouda's. For reasons beyond my control, I had travelled without a railway ticket. I called on Gurudeo and to my surprise he asked me not to travel without the ticket, more so when I travelled to meet Gurudeo. How could he know that I had travelled without the ticket ?

Shankarrao Dharmadhikari, an old stenographar of Gurudeo had the following to narrate. In the year 1920, Gurudeo happened to be in Inchageri and was slightly indisposed. He had been at the Samadhi of Inchageri Maharaj for darshan. He went into a sudden trance and fell down. The attendants felt that Gurudeo was unconscious and moved him to his room. They felt much concern and sent one Mr. Mallari to Bijapur to bring Dr. Karkhanis. By about 8 p. m. Gurudeo came out of trance. The first thing he enquired was the whereabouts of Mallari. On knowing from the attendants that he had gone to bring Dr. Karkhanis he insisted on getting Mallari back immediately. He knew nothing about this Mallari earlier. How could this happen ? How could he know that Mallari was sent to bring a Doctor ?

Gurudeo Ranade worked as a paper-setter and examiner in Philosophy at the M. A. examinations of various universities. On one such occasion, he was to work with Mr. Makenziking, Principal of St. Xavier's College. The meeting of the paper-setters was to be held the next day at Bombay and Shri Gurudeo was to start by mid-day train. Yamanakka, sister of Shri Gurudeo had arranged everything including the tiffin-carrier for the journey. Gurudeo stepped out of the house and was about to get into the cart, that was to take him to the Railway station. There appeared a Lamani

-one who told Gurudeo that he was arriving from Inchageri.- Gurudeo turned back and entered the house with this guest from Inchageri. For half an hour or so, Gurudeo was speaking to him. Yamanakka, worried as she was, went on reminding that Gurudeo would be late for the train. But things were different with Gurudeo. He got the tiffin-carrier from the cart and sweets prepared were served to this guest. To the utter dismay of Yamanakka, even the time for the train had passed, The luggage had to be removed from the cart. Within an hour after this, a telegram from Bombay was received. The meeting due to be held the next day was postponed. It is said Gurudeo told Yamanakka later : "We cannot proceed unless Maharaj permits. You may blame me for giving the sweets to that Lamani. But he happened to be the messenger sent by Maharaj and I had to respond."

How can one explain these things? Ways of Great Souls are beyond man's reasoning and imagination. Such incidents speak about the supernatural powers of the Realised Souls. For common people like us these are like miracles. For the Great Souls like Gurudeo, they are natural things.

Can we call this Supernatural Telepathy? Or shall we say that this is the normal routine with the Realised Souls ?

The only criterion for the reality of a man's experience is himself and God and nobody else, No intellectual rule, no logical sequence can stand before him, either to support or to deny what he might say. The reality of his experience and the heights to which he has reached, are known only to himself and to his Master.

– Gurudeo

Report of the Academy of Comparative Philosophy and Religion Belgaum

for the quarter ending 31-12-1985

The Vaikuntha chaturdasi Nama-Saptah was celebrated in Gurudeo Mandir for 5 days from 21st November 1985. This time, it was attended by a good number of sadhakas and intensive meditation was done under the guidance of Shri R. P. alias Ramanna Kulkarni of Athani. He also delivered talks for 3 days during the Saptah. Shri D. B. Parulekar delivered a talk for one day.

Shri S. A. Patil, I. A. S. Commissioner for Religious and Charitable Endowments, Bangalore paid a visit to Gurudeo Mandir on 28-12-1985. The local trustees received him. He expressed satisfaction at the working of the Trust. The Charity Commissioner and the Assistant Charity Commissioner, Belgaum were with him. After tea with Shri N. S. Metrani-one of the trustees-the guests left Gurudeo Mandir.

The year 1986 is the Birth Centenary Year of Shri Gurudeo R. D. Ranade. To celebrate the year, there will be three Nama-Sapthas of seven days each in Gurudeo Mandir; one on his Birth day, second on the day of Punya-tithi and the third on Vaikunthachaturdasi day. Disciples and Sadhakas are requested to attend and participate in all these three Saptahs for intensive meditation and sadhana. The first series of Gurudeo Ranade Memorial Lectures will be for five - days by Dr. P. M. Upadhye, Bombay in Marathi on - श्री गुरुदेव रानडे १) लौकिक जीवन आणि अलौकिक कार्य २) थोर साक्षात्कारी संत The second series of G. R. Memorial Lectures will be delivered by Shri Motilal Pandit (New Delhi) in English on : The ' Religious Search for the Ultimate ' during the Vaikunthachaturdasi Nama- Saptah. These lectures will be - immediately published There will be a third publication in Hindi on भारतीय समकालीन दर्शनमे प्रो. रानडे के योगदान का समीक्षात्मक अध्ययन ।

Dr. R V Deshpande of Athani paid Rs. 100/- and became life - subscriber of Pathway to God.

Donations were received from :-	Rs.
1) One Sadhaka from Pune	25
2) Smt. Radha C/o. Shri S. V. Jahagirdar Karnataka Bank Ltd., Jamkhandi	500
3) Smt. Vaidehi Diwakar, Pune	11
4) Shri R. B. Patil, Basapur	5
5) Shri P. P. Pandit, Bombay	100
6) Shri S. S. Tharkar, Belgaum	5